



THE
EXPOSITOR
AND · HOMILETIC · REVIEW



JOURNAL OF PRACTICAL CHURCH METHODS



THE JAKOB JORDAENS MADONNA

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The EXPOSITOR

and The HOMILETIC REVIEW

A Journal of Practical Church Methods

THE PILOT SMILED

Robert Louis Stevenson's story of the storm that caught the vessel off the rocky coast and threatened to drive it and its passengers to destruction is thrilling, but more, it has a lesson for us of the H-bomb era.

In the midst of the storm, one terrified man, contrary to orders, went on deck, made the risky passage to the pilot house, saw the helmsman lashed fast to his post, holding the wheel unwaveringly, and inch by inch turning the ship to safer water out to sea. The pilot saw the daring passenger and smiled. Then the drenched passenger retraced his steps and went below into the cabin of the ship and gave this note of cheer to his frightened fellow-passengers: "I have seen the face of the pilot, and he smiled. All is well!"

Blessed is he, who in the midst of earthly stress and peril, can say with equal assurance, "I have seen the face of my Pilot, and He smiled!"

An international magazine of parish administration, methods of church work, practical theology, applied religion and all phases of minister's work.

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WE DON'T WANT TO SADDLE OURSELVES WITH A BIG DEBT

That's what many ministers and church board members feel when confronted with the need for new construction. Though the facilities may be urgently needed, no one responsible for the future of a church wants to incur tremendous indebtedness which they may not be able to repay for many years to come.

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Fortunately, there is an answer — a means of providing substantial cash funds in a short time so that only a modest debt — or none at all — need be incurred in construction of that new church, educational building, parsonage.

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We told the people of Reformed Church that from \$40,000 to \$50,000 could be raised, after a careful statistical analysis of their fund-raising potential. Though the campaign is not yet completed, \$42,189 has been subscribed and the average gift is \$235. They should go well over the higher expectancy of attainment.

In Irvington, we have said that from \$70,000 to \$80,000 can be expected and, so far, \$66,995 has been subscribed with considerable more to come.

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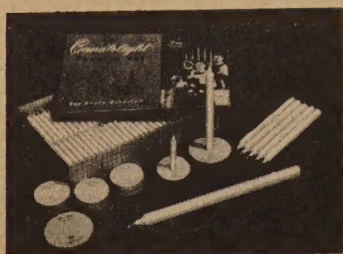
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THE ECLIPSE OF THE PREACHER

EDWARD LAIRD MILLS

HISTORICALLY Protestants have emphasized the primacy of the pulpit. That emphasis developed a race of preachers and led to the building of large sanctuaries, sometimes seating 1000 people or more. The current trend is toward smaller sanctuaries and duplicate or triplicate services. Great religious rallies must be held outdoors or in secular auditoriums. Counseling and liturgical worship increasingly take the pastor's attention. The general disappearance of the Sunday evening service with its evangelistic accent has helped to give the pulpit secondary status. Much of Billy Graham's enormous influence derives from the fact that he meets so little competition in this field. Readers who have memories of great preachers, - Quale, Cadman, Gunsaulus, Jowett - should cherish them carefully for it is unlikely that they will ever hear their equals. The politicians are in a similar predicament. In platform mastery there are no successors to Bryan, Beveridge and Woolley. A proper make-up for TV has usurped the place formerly occupied by eloquent speech. A British writer laments that churches nowadays are looking for "competence in management rather than power in preaching."

The prime cause for this distressing condition is not far to seek. Due to the wide use of radio and TV, listeners have become habituated to fifteen and thirty minute limits to the spoken word. That habit discourages creative imagination and compels frugality in the use of illustrations. The sermon becomes, in many cases a moralistic homily courteously delivered and politely received. Preachers no longer mount up with wings as eagles -- the runways are too short. The college dean who admonished the visiting preacher that "no souls are saved after the first twenty minutes," may have been partially correct. Unfortunately, it is also true that few are likely to be

saved within that skimpy limit. It is hard to preach for a verdict with one eye on the clock. Thus conditioned, the sermon becomes a mere skeleton with little meat on its bones. It will take time to develop a method of sermon construction which will at once preserve traditional values and conform with modern necessities.

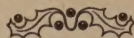
That problem is a baffling one. The proverbial man-in-the-street is impressionistic rather than thoughtful. On the lower level he gets his education from the comics; on the upper level from the copiously illustrated news-magazines which appeal to the eye rather than the intellect. Not much assistance is available for the man who desires to love God with the mind. Perhaps a teaching ministry, based on the Bible and freely using current events to spotlight eternal truth would afford a chance to share with layman an awareness of the contents and implications of the Christian faith. It might be worth trying. Undoubtedly the three-point sermon is slated for honorable retirement. One point, imaginatively treated, will better meet the need. There will also have to be a shift in the type of illustrations used. Absorption in mechanics is growing at the expense of familiarity with rural life. The modern preacher must come to feel at home in the age of jets, atoms and electronics. He must learn to talk intelligently about its awesome characteristics and the difficult task of relating these to the purposes of God in creation and redemption must be attempted.

In some way he will have to break through the barrier posed by secular culture, of which many Protestant churchmen have drunk too deeply. If and when he is successful in doing this, he will find himself in fruitful fellowship with the great apostle whose frequent and urgent exhortation was, "Preach the Gospel." The British writer quoted above notes that Christ, Himself, commission-

ed His disciples primarily to "preach" and only secondarily to "worship, serve and shepherd."

The dynamic nature of the gospel and the ever-recurring needs of men for spir-

itual sustenance, encourage the belief that ultimately some way will be found to return to the pulpit at least a part of the power and prestige it formerly possessed.



GOD'S HEALING WORK OF LOVE

EARL HOWELL

FROM the beginning of creation until now God is in the business of healing. When he placed man on the earth, the Father had in mind certain purposes and goals. It was His plan that this new creature should achieve the highest possible degree of moral perfection. If this goal were to be reached man must possess the right of free choice.

Bestowing such a power on man involved great hazard. Man, inexperienced and with little knowledge of himself or the nature of the world, was in danger of making decisions and performing acts that would damage the earth and inflict wounds upon his body, mind, and spirit.

Exploring the world and using its resources, man was sure to damage the earth, jeopardizing his future life there. Seeking to discover his physical capacities, he would encounter immutable laws and inflict mortal wounds upon his body. There was danger that man would injure his spirit in the attempt to discover a satisfactory relationship with his fellow-man, so his soul would languish in sorrow, pain, and in need of healing. These were not merely possibilities, they actually would take place.

Since God placed man upon the earth without consulting him it was morally necessary that the Creator should assume his share of responsibility for the hazard of man, without depriving the creature of the right of free choice. Therefore, as a moral being, God assumed that responsibility by writing the principle of healing into the nature of the earth and of man.

Thus, from the time man appeared upon

the earth, it was his privilege to choose and his obligation to accept the hazard. In the case of injury to earth or himself the hurt need not prove fatal. It could be healed.

Evidence of God's work of healing and love are to be observed all about us in nature. Take the carton of empty tin cans carelessly dumped upon a country roadside. One coming after is offended by the ghastly scar inflicted upon the landscape. But let him return to the spot the end of a year. He will find the healing forces of Nature already at work. Grass, weeds and vines will have sprung up and covered the unsightly object. Meanwhile, the light of the sun, aided by moisture and oxygen in the air, will have begun the work of reducing the unsightly objects to the elements from which they came. Within a few years the work of disintegrations will be complete. The cans will disappear, the earth will be more fertile because of their presence, and vines, weeds and grass will feed him on their ashes.

This law also applies in cases where the earth has been mutilated by such agencies as fire. In 1908 some careless person dropped a lighted match in a forest growing upon the mountain and valley surrounding the So Duc River in Clallam County, Washington. Within a few hours 12,000 acres of the finest timber on the Olympic Peninsula was destroyed. When I first visited the area in 1923 the landscape was still scared and barren. Tall, ghostly trunks of dead trees stood here and there bearing silent witness

ness to the carelessness of man.

But already the healing forces of Nature were at work. Encouraged by man they soon produced an abundance of trees which now stand forty feet in height covering the entire area with green. To-day's passer-by would find it difficult to visualize the great wound that marred the mountainside forty years ago.

Take another example.

My family and I drove through the Mojave desert in California. It was our first visit there and we expected to find a barren waste. But our disappointment was entirely pleasant. Shortly before we were here heavy rains had fallen and the ground was still moist. The water, having awakened the dormant life in roots of grass and seeds of flowering plants, had called them into life. What we saw was grass covering the landscape with a blanket of green and wild-flowers forming patterns of red, violet and gold.

This charming scene bore witness to the fact that God's healing work of love still is an active force upon the face of the earth.

The principle of healing is active also in the human body. In case of a wound in the flesh, whether a pin-prick or a bruise, a burn, laceration, or a broken bone, the healing forces of the body rush to the scene to mend the hurt. Barring obstructions such as fear, depleted forces or toxic conditions in the body, the healing will go forward with dispatch until the wound is fully cured.

There is no wonder, therefore, that when Jesus walked upon the earth, He always responded with tenderness, sympathy, and compassion in the presence of human suffering. Witness the Sabbath afternoon when the Lord visited the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. There was a legend that periodically, when the water was troubled, the ill person first to step into it was healed.

Jesus found the place filled with invalids. Among them was a man ill thirty-eight years. During that time no one had been found with compassion or tenderness sufficient to prompt him to help the impotent man into the troubled waters.

This man drew the attention of Jesus, whose questions brought out the fact he still had faith. The Master commanded, "Arise, take up your pallet and

walk," and he did.

But Jesus had enemies, men who watched His every move, seeking something with which to accuse Him. When they heard that He had performed this work of mercy on the Sabbath day, they charged Him with violating their law. To this accusation, Jesus responded, "My Father is working still, and I am working." It were as if the Lord had said, "My Father is in the business of healing. He keeps at it day and night and doesn't let up on the Sabbath. I am His partner and I keep busy too."

Further pointing up the Lord's attitude toward human suffering is His statement on another occasion. "It is not the will of my Father in Heaven," He said, "that one of these little ones should perish." Let no one believe that Jesus referred only to infants and small children. He meant that God wills health and peace of mind for all His children in the whole world. It is not God's will that any of these should suffer in body, mind or spirit.

Most obstructions to the healing of the wounds of the body lie in the habits and attitudes of man. Many such hindrances remain unknown to science. But if they could be found and removed it is safe to say that God's healing work would be effective upon every illness known to the body.

God's greatest cures are in the realm of the wounded spirit. Here His healing is swift, sure, complete and in response to human need. He has many ways of making the spirit well. Time, for instance, dissipates sorrow. The child, who today weeps in heart-break and disappointment will be all smiles tomorrow. The heart of the widow which last year was full of gloom, sorrow, and bereavement, is full of sunshine now.

The most deadly wounds to the human spirit result from selfishness and pride. All the soul-blighting sins known to man have their roots in these. Ill-will, resentment, all acts that do not take into consideration one's obligations to God and fellow-men, grow out of selfishness and pride.

The unforgiving spirit is symptomatic of lack of generosity. Holding of grudges reveals the absence of humility. These sins raise barriers against that love

which prompts God to heal the wounded spirit. Demanding special attention from the Father, they prompted Him to do something about it.

As already said, when a wound occurs in the flesh, all the healing forces of the body are alerted to do battle against the hurt. In like manner, selfishness and pride in the human spirit brought God's Son into the world on the greatest healing mission in the program of the Father.

Forgiveness of sins is a work of healing. From the hour Jesus died on Golgo-

tha, until the present, the realization of the significance of the cross challenges selfishness and pride causing them to flee the heart. Their flight leaves room for love, tenderness, sympathy, compassion, humility, unselfishness, repentance, and the spirit of forgiveness. These are God's agents through which He forgives and heals the wounded spirit of man. These, when present in our life, give evidence that the Father still is bent upon healing the wounded spirit of man. God's healing work of love!



Ministerial Courtesies and Christian Amenities

RAY H. PIERSON

THAT there should exist a more or less standardized Code of Ethics covering a minister's relation to his fellow ministers becomes increasingly apparent. The pride of the profession, the love of the brethren, and the true fraternity that must exist among all of God's ordained servants, these all unite in demanding it. There is now some sort of a code of ethics existing among the clergy, but it is not sufficiently standardized nor followed.

The Apostle exhorted the Church to "remember them which have rule over you, or guide you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow," and to "obey them that have rule over you, or guide you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief," and to "know them which labor among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them in love for their work's sake." He thus acknowledged that the ministry is a work worthy of high esteem, and it can hardly be imagined that he would exhort laymen to esteem their ministers highly unless he, himself, so esteemed them.

The clergy should be the first to show esteem, to understand and practice the proper courtesies and amenities toward one another, then the laity will better

understand just what the proprieties are that should be followed, for sometimes they do embarrass a minister by requesting from him, a service which should have been performed by another minister. They do not always stop to think, but at such a time the clergy, if they have a clearly and well defined code of ethics, can prove they hold one another in highest esteem and the effect upon the laity will be a good one.

If such a code is to be standardized, it is evident that no one man can arbitrarily fix the standard. Given a spirit of true fraternity, plus ordinary thoughtfulness among the clergy, and an ethical code can soon be adopted, whether written or unwritten. Upon some few minor points there may be possible differences at first, but with a little attention to details, a few conferences in which the subject is carefully considered, and certainly a satisfactory understanding may be reached.

A Code of Ethics should embrace a minister's relation to (1) his neighbor, whether of his own or another denomination; (2) his predecessor; (3) his successor; and (4) his brother minister, though a stranger. Obviously, the Christly amenities will cause a man to be gracious, hospitable, loyal and charitable toward his brethren, and to speak only good of his fellow ministers. Among all the

(See page 421)

The Editor's Columns



THE GIFT

IT is a most unusual bit of artistry, that lariat. Thirty-five feet of four-ply deer skin having neither splice nor blemish, as pretty a piece of primitive handiwork as one will ever see.

It doesn't seem possible, but for over thirty years that rope has hung on my study wall as a constant reminder of several very basic life-truths too often ignored in this materialistic era when all that is supposed to be needed to reach a complete and happy life is a sufficiency of the cash of the realm, be that realm what it may.

Al, a fine, quiet and friendly Mormon lad, was my guide. I still get an occasional word from him which warms me, and brings back memories.

It was January, high in the rugged Sierra Madres of Chihuahua. The almost constant rain, freezing as it fell, soaked our clothes but failed even to dampen our spirits. One night as we sat shivering before a water-logged pitch-fire, and under a taut tarpaulin stretched between our two tents, a wiry little sodden native came clattering down the rock-littered canyon side on a typically diminutive native "Caballo" drawn by the light of our fire and the luring smell of the bacon. From the neatly hand-hewn wooden saddle on the back of his wee-bit horse, there hung a lariat which he tossed under our tarp. I had never seen one like it. Perfect! The more I fondled it the more I wanted it, so I asked Al to ask the native what he would sell it for.

Then it was I learned a lesson I may never have thought of before. So few do, particularly in this weirdly materialistic era of ours. Money is not everything and it was a lesson which has grown richer and fuller over the years that have passed since that wilderness night under the dripping tarpaulin.

In reply to my query Al said slowly, pausing as though to study my reactions,

"You don't have enough money in camp to buy that rope." Then he went on and I am glad he did, "That little Mexican runs a few heads of cattle up here in the hills, so the rope is the main tool of his profession. He has used it as a weapon of defense. It has countless uses all of which are pretty important to the native. Al blew a big ring of smoke toward the fire, hesitated and then went on, "When you need a piece of rope you go to the store and buy it, but the native lives a hundred miles from the nearest store and when he needs a new rope he has to kill several deer, cure and cut the hides and make his own rope, and that is a long, hard job. Down here, Joe, money means absolutely nothing to the natives. There is no place to spend it. There is nothing it can buy. The only way you can buy is by having something the other fellow might want - then you trade with him for what he wants. You might just as well forget the rope," and he pulled the collar of his heavy woolen overcoat up around his ears against the decided nip in the air.

Yet, that same rope has hung on my study wall all these years since that soggy, miserably uncomfortable night.

Days later, when camp was broken and we had packed back through the lovely, snow-draped Blue Ridge and I was about to start for the border, Al gave me the rope and left the room without a word. He never told me, but his brother did, that though I had a little money with me Al had the medium of exchange and had given his good wool overcoat to the native, his only real protection against the winter that was lying deep over the pine covered mountains, that, in turn he might give me the rope I had so openly admired.

Daily, that rope, the pride of my little collection, speaks to me of true brother-

(See page 426)

THE CHURCH AT WORK



PRAYER FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP

Faithful Father of the Universe, faithful art Thou to Thy children.

Thou hast begotten us, Thou doest preserve us, Thou doest provide us with the necessities of this life.

Faithfully doest Thou guard and keep us from dangers which beset the body and soul. We enter the joys of Thy presence acknowledging our thanks and praise, for the blessedness of our redemption through Thy glorious Son, Jesus Christ.

For the sanctifying influence of Thy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens and preserves the whole Christian Church on earth;

For the privilege of being Thine, we speak Thy praise. Even when we are faithless to Thee, Thy love and mercy surround and keep us.

Forgive our shortcomings. Thou art aware of how often we bow before the fear of men, how frequently we give in to the greed of gain.

How, again and again, we falter before the opinion of our friends and ridicule of our enemies.

Keep us, O Father, from hiding our fears behind a bold front of anger and boastfulness.

Save us from venting our disappointments on those we meet along the way of life. Spare us from the sin of being pleasant and nice to our acquaintances and being moody and unkind to those who are closest to us and upon whom we depend and often take for granted.

Enable our Church to continue its healing ministry in this community through the ministry of the Word and Sacrament; through the activities of organizations, and through the lives of individuals who constantly confess their faith in Thee our Lord and Master.

Enfold within Thy love and mercy all near and dear to us, whatever duties they may be called upon to perform and wherever they may be.

Send us forth now, O Lord, with the consciousness that we would be faithful even as Thou art faithful unto us. Amen.

W.A. Kuntzleman

CHURCH LOYALTY

Billy Sunday once said, "Going to church on Sunday won't make you a Christian any more than going to the garage will make you an automobile."

While there is food for thought in this

statement of the evangelist, I am moved to disagree with him. I have met many people who have been made Christian in the church. They have been made Christian because they found God there.

The church is the workshop of the Master. It is the place where God is working all the time. In the reading and preaching of His Word, in the prayers, in the songs of praise, in the fellowship of kindred minds at worship, God works His wonders of redemption.

It is not the church that saves, but the spirit of God in the church. Weary souls find rest, hopeless souls find hope, groping souls find light, sinful souls find redemption and pardon, sorrowing souls find eternal comfort because they find the Spirit of God in the church.

It is true that God can work any place but He does some of His most marvelous work in the church.

Some people are missing the blessing of God because they are not loyal in their church attendance. Like the disciple, Thomas, who was not present when the risen Lord appeared to the group, so do many now miss the blessing of His presence from wilful absence from the hour of worship in their church.

Don't ever miss the blessing of God! It is better to miss anything else. Keep loyal to your church

Walter R. Young

THE SANCTUARY - 1956

Traditional as a Lenten guide, The Sanctuary is back with a treasury of new devotional material. It is again written by Dr. Chas. M. Crowe, pastor of Wilmette Parish Methodist Church, Ill. The little 48 page booklet contains one

meditation for each day of Lent, starting with Ash Wednesday and concluding with Easter Sunday.

Primarily designed as a guide for personal devotions, the Sanctuary, during the years has reached a circulation in the hundreds of thousands. The individual copies are 10¢. It may also be ordered in quantities at 75¢ per dozen or \$3.95 per hundred. Publication date is January 9th. Write Abingdon Press, 810 Broadway, Nashville 2, Tenn.

PREPARATION FOR LENT 1956

Emphasis on the personal life of Jesus, His ministry, Gethsemane, Golgotha, the Tomb, the Resurrection. What Jesus means to the individual soul. Let us walk with Him, as we study Him, His love for us, the meaning of His mission, and His return to the Father, as taught by Paul, to the Corinthians:

The Corinthian Church 1:1-16

Wisdom 1:17 - 2:16

Wise Conclusion Chapter 3

Their Debt Chapter 6

Godly Self-control Chapter 8

My Way or God's? 19:1-12

Diversity of Gifts Chapter 11

Failure Without Love 13:1-3

Love to Conquer 13:4-8

For All Men 13:9-13

Gospel Paul Preached 15:1-11

BOOKS OF VALUE IN YOUR S.S.

1956 Lesson Commentaries.

The Douglass Sunday School lessons, by Earl L. Douglass, Macmillan, 494 pp. \$2.95, is a commentary on the International S.S. Lessons, featuring Bible-centered material, sound doctrine and teaching aids that aid.

Peloubet's Selected Notes, 82nd Annual volume by Wilbur M. Smith, Wilde, 465 pp. \$2.75. It is a complete commentary, International Lesson Outlines by quarters. 1-Luke's Story of our Lord. 2-Luke's story of our Lord and the story of the Early Church. 3-Writings of Faith and Encouragement (Hebrews to Revelations). 4-Great Passages of the Bible.

55 Dynamic Parable Talks to Young Folks by John Henry Sargent, Wilde, 116 pp. \$2. The author's 77 Parable Talks, \$2, and 105 Modern Parables for Young Folks, \$1.75, are known and wide-

ly used by leaders of young people.

The Speaker's Treasury for Sunday School Teachers, by Herbert V. Prochnow, Wilde. 175 pp. \$2.50. This is a reference and ideabook with suggestions on preparing a talk, leading a discussion group or class, and making reports. The author, an officer of a large Chicago bank, has been active in church work for many years; widely known as a speaker at high school and college commencements, business and professional groups, is the author of Meditations on the Ten Commandments, Great Stories from Great Lives, The Public Speaker's Treasury Chest, and other volumes.

Doran's Ministers Manual, 1956 edition, Harper, 395 pp. \$2.75, listed as compiled and edited by M.K.W. Heicher and G.B.F. Hallock, ten sections arranged to be of practical help to pastors and church leaders.

Concordia Publishing House offers the following worthwhile pamphlet helps:

Mealtime Prayers, 5¢ or \$3.33 - 100

Why Confirmation, 10¢, \$6.67 per 100

When You Pray, 10¢ or \$4.50 per 100

Witness Where You Are, 10¢, \$6 - 100

What I Owe My Parents, 10¢, \$6.67-100

You Can't Witness? 4¢ or \$3.60 per 100

Does Your Child Know Jesus?

10¢ or \$3.50 - 100

Bible Study in an H-Bomb World,

10¢ or \$5.00 - 100

To Join or Not to Join,

10¢ \$6.67 per 100

My Sunday School, 5¢ or \$3.00 per 100

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

As a result of the gifts of the children of our Sunday Schools to the Epiphany appeal, we shall be able to build from 175 to 200 chapels in India. Receipts in 1955 were \$80,277.53. The Indians contribute to the chapels, also. God multiplies our gifts.

From Synod of the NW Stewardship letter

SUMMER DRIVE-IN SERVICES

We again held four services at the Skyway Niagara Drive In Theater this summer with unexpected success. The attendance on July 24th was 655. On August 7th it was 674 and 811 on August

21st. 527 came on Sept. 11th proving without a doubt the interest in these services. On the September Sunday we held our service in a pouring, constant rain and had 527 people present despite the bad weather.

Martin J. Hoepfner

DIAL FOR A PRAYER

The Roanoke Greene Memorial Methodist Church had an idea. They made public announcement of the fact that any person dialing number 2-7685 on their phone, numbers which correspond with the dial letters A SOUL, would hear a recorded prayer.

Thousands, unexpectedly, called that phone number disrupting telephone service for patrons whose numbers were somewhat similar, to the extent that the DIAL FOR A PRAYER service had to be discontinued. The church officials were told that only by installing specially designed equipment would they be able to handle the overwhelming load of calls for prayer.

CHURCH FUND RAISING COLUMNS

By Norman E. Nygaard, D.D.

Dr. Nygaard is a Presbyterian minister who has contributed regularly to The Expositor for more than thirty years. For the last six years he has given full time to writing and professional fund-raising for churches.

QUESTION: A great many of our Board question the advisability of using professional fund-raising organizations because they believe that they employ "high pressure" methods, oftentimes almost forcing people, against their wills, to give.

It is also true that some of our officers oppose any forward step at all for fear of criticism that the church itself is guilty of the same practice. We're on the horns of a dilemma. We need to enlarge our church building but apparently the Lord expects us to raise the money for that purpose. At least He hasn't provided us with the funds for the project. What shall we do?

ANSWER: It is well to recognize the fact that you will always have people in your church who will forever criticize the church for challenging them to give. Undoubtedly the Rich Young Ruler, turning sorrowfully away

from Jesus, may have felt that he, too, was having pressure applied to give. "Go, sell all that thou hast and come follow me," what Jesus said to him.

If the Church is to wait upon every forward step until the time comes when it will never be criticized for taking it, the Church will stand still -- and gradually slip backward into decay.

There are some people who respond to every request for money for any purpose remarking that "high pressure" is being applied. Evidently, to their minds, high pressure is used whenever they are asked to give to any cause.

While there are doubtless exceptions to the rule, it is probably true that a good fund-raising organization, far from using "high pressure" methods, keeps the church from using such pressures. It accomplishes this basically, in two ways:

First, by building for the church a carefully devised public relations program, designed to convince people that it is desirable to give to such a worthy cause as that one for which the church is raising money.

Second, by so organizing a campaign that the maximum number of people are enlisted in it and are convinced of the worth of the cause.

You can always check on the kind of organization which you are considering employing. Their work is never done in a corner. Write to some of their clients and find out what the results and methods of the campaigns have been. Don't choose churches of their selection for such inquiries, but pick churches of your own choice. The fund-raising organization of good repute welcomes that kind of an investigation.

For information which will help you in considering or planning your Fund Raising Campaign, fill in the following coupon and mail it to the EXPOSITOR. No obligation.

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THE PULPIT



The Best Christmas Gift

HARRY A. G. ABBE

Text: John 7:37 - Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

THESE words were spoken in the Temple at Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people made booths in memory of their transitory journey in the wilderness. The prophet Jeremiah told the people God was "the fountain of living waters," and in His appeal to come unto Him and drink, Jesus refers to the spiritual satisfaction which comes from God, and which He could impart to anyone who believed on Him. To the woman of Samaria, He went farther and promised this spiritual gift would become "a well of water springing up unto eternal life," to anyone who received it. "Eternal life" implied an indissoluble bond with God which could not be broken by the incident of death. That this water of life was ministered by the gift of the Holy Spirit was shown by Peter on the Day of Pentecost, when he declared that the prophet Joel's prophecy that God would pour forth His Spirit like living water "upon all flesh" had been fulfilled. John 10:22 says that Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," and it is only through that gift that one can realize Jesus' invitation to come to Him and drink of the fountain of life.

It is worth noting that Jesus suggests no dogma, creed, mediator, sacrament, or other condition that stands between the soul and its direct approach to God. The indwelling Spirit was the only bond required. So also in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, no mediatorial office stood between the repentant exile and the paternal love that hastened to welcome

him home. Jesus' promise that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst," likewise avoids any condition but spiritual ones for communion with Him.

The only obstacle to such communion is in the soul, itself - the suspicion that no heavenly fount exists, or distrust of God, or actual resentment against Him. A quaint story is told to describe how gently and unobtrusively God seeks to dispel all such barriers and make His way to reluctant human hearts.

The story is of an infidel of the Middle Ages who hated the Bible and all things sacred. He wanted to defy God and his defiance took the form of an absurd challenge. He went out into a field all armed to meet God in a personal combat. He threw his glove down on the ground before God, then looked up and cried as if to his bitterest enemy: "God, if there is a God, I defy thee here and now to mortal combat. If thou indeed art, put forth thy power of which thy pretended priests make such boast." No answer, such as terrible lightning to frighten him or strike him dead. No sudden upheaval of the earth to swallow him from sight forever. No crash of thunder to silence his voice. But God was not dead, and an answer came as gently as the still, small voice which spoke to the despairing soul of the prophet Elijah at Carmel. It was only a little piece of paper fluttering in the air just over the infidel's head. Down it came to earth. He took it up and found words written on it. Aristotle said the perfect number is three, because it is the only number with a beginning, middle and end. So the three words this man found written on the paper are the three perfect words which scientific materialism never can supply, but which are the

potent words in any language, "God is love." It is safe to believe the infidel found it hard to combat a God like that, and presumably he came to see possibilities in that love of God to which he had been blind before. It may be it even turned his bitterness to sweetness and light.

In the same quiet manner appeared the Christ Child on the first Christmas day in Bethlehem. Phillips Brooks beautifully describes it in his famous Christmas hymn:

*How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is gi'en!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.*

So "silently, silently" has Christ, Himself come to those who believed in Him at Christmas and all the seasons of the year, to lead them by His Spirit to the fountain of living waters where are found the "blessings of His heaven." Christmas is the constant reminder of them, and without them the season would be merry and amiable, but superficial and devoid of its deepest meaning. The disciples did not fully realize them while Jesus was still with them. It was not until He was parted from them and ceased to be localized, and could be seen in the spiritual perspective of all history and all eternity, that He could more perfectly lead them and all Christians to the living waters to which He invited the people at the Temple feast. At Pentecost the disciples were "clothed with power from on high," "were all filled with the Holy Spirit," and prepared to manifest the real meaning of God's Christmas gift, and show that it was perpetual and eternal.

Christians have a great mission to witness to "blessings of His heaven" in the church, but a still better place is in the home. Yet, drinking at the fountain of living waters and enjoying the "blessings of His heaven" were not ends in themselves to Jesus. He took the spiritual into the practical, the divine into the human, the eternal into the temporal. He dined with self-righteous Pharisees, befriended loose women, argued with learned scribes, conformed to Jewish religious rites, chided His disciples when they erred, was always seeking to heal broken bodies, mend disrupted minds, comfort the sorrowing, and teach principles of economic, judicial, and social

righteousness. Bright and shining have been the multitude of Christians who have sought to follow His peerless example. Jane Addams of Hull House testified her workers were all Christians and mostly, if not all, members of Christian churches. Wherever philanthropic, humanitarian, and charitable enterprises prevail, there is the spirit of the Christ of Bethlehem.

What a marvellous transformation it would be if the Christian spirit permeated all human society! When we hear the carols joyfully ringing on every corner, that transformation of spirit is what longing hearts seem to wish for at Christmas and every succeeding season of the year. But as the seasons advance, too often the joy of the carols seems to subside in the distance. In our competitive economy the tendency is to fall down cravenly before the power of money and idolize it as the greatest thing in the world. Big business can drive out and frustrate its small competitor with the mere signing of a big fat check. Christ and the scripture warned of the menace of money, but because of the demoralizing injustices, the financial barriers, and actual distinctions which money creates, our country is honeycombed with the fascism of money power.

The offenses against the Christmas spirit through all forms of greed, brutality, selfishness, perversity, and criminality fill the sordid sheets of our daily newspapers continually and shame the Christian name of the beloved country in which we live. But, thank God, nothing prevents the angelic songs from returning and the carols from ringing out again the joyful gospel that Christ is born in Bethlehem, has never ceased to live in the hearts of those who believe in Him, and the eternal purpose of God goes on, till all the Christian church arrive safely at the heavenly fountain and know the joys of the "well of water springing up unto eternal life."

Blessed are those who have exemplified the Christmas spirit through all the centuries from Perpetua and Felicitas and the other early martyrs to the present time. They have engrossed the Christian scriptures, stood out against tyranny, enlightened the world's ignorance, relieved human suffering, gone to wilderness

jungles to uplift backward tribes, delivered slaves from bondage, reformed oppressive labor practices, lightened brutal penalties, built centers for social amelioration, and performed other humanitarian services without number. A single illustration from far-away Korea will serve to summarize the glorious roll.

Dr. L.H.Evans saw a missionary physician in Korea who had left a lucrative and promising practice at home, performed an operation, and when it was over, the surgeon removed his surgical apron and he and Dr. Evans were retiring from the room. Dr. Evans said, "Doctor, is every day like this?" "He only smiled," says Dr. Evans. "Beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead; his eyes were glassy, his lips were almost purple with the strain and his hands trembled with fatigue. I said to him, 'Doctor, how much would you have received for this operation in America?' He replied, 'Perhaps three or four hundred dollars. It was a complicated one.' 'How much will you receive for this?' I asked. Looking at the poor Korean woman who had been wheeled into the operating room with only a copper in her hand, asking that in Christ's name he give her life, he looked back at me and with tears welling up in those fine eyes and a choke in his voice, he said, 'Well, sir, for this I will get nothing but her gratitude and my Master's smile. But that, sir, is worth more than all the plaudits and money the world can give.'"

What an impressive evidence there was in that good surgeon's self-denial service that Christ still lives forever in the hearts and lives of those who know and love Him, who show that His entrance makes all seasons thrill with the Christmas joy. Those "tears welling up in the fine eyes" were the visible symbol of "the well of water springing up unto eternal life." The good surgeon's Christian spirit, expressing itself in such deeds of sacrificial love, was the best Christmas gift he, or anybody, could possibly give to the world at any time.

To possess that spirit was the purpose of Jesus' appeal in the Temple to those who thirsted for a higher spiritual life, to come unto Him and drink of what Isaiah called "the waters of salvation," and which Jesus declared spring up "unto

eternal life." Without the gospel of eternal life Christmas would lose its highest joy and the fulfillment of all the Christian revelation.

In all the vicissitudes of our lives, Jesus still calls us to heed His gracious invitation, and find in Him the comforting hope of home at the end of the journey.

*Far, far away, like bells at evening
pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land
and sea,
And laden souls, by thousands meekly
stealing,
Kind Shepherds turn their weary steps
to Thee.
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the
night.*



And The Fig Tree Withered

WILLIAM GODDARD SHERMAN

Text: Matthew 21:18-22

THE meekness of Jesus has been over-emphasized, while His sternness is soft-pedaled. Our failure to recognize the frequent sharpness of His statements has caused us to lose sight of the vigor and vitality of His teaching.

For example, we commonly discourse at great length upon the compassion of the Christ, and give the overall impression that His every sentence was oozing with sweetness. Yet the truth is that Jesus often spoke sharply of divine wrath, and it is from His own lips that we discover most of the New Testament teaching about hell and eternal punishment.

An instance of how we play up what we like and play down what we dislike is in evidence in our present text. The cursing of the fig tree is surely one of the least understood and most rarely stated of the parables. The reason is obvious: it reflects the sternness, the bitterness of Jesus. Yet the verse describing faith which moves mountains is one of the most widely quoted of the New Testament. And this despite the fact that the two are a part of the whole, and never should be separated lest the full

meaning of Jesus' message be lost!

Briefly, let us catch the setting. It is certain that the incident took place toward the end of our Lord's ministry. All the more reason why His words should have a cutting edge of denunciation. Time was short; dangers were many; followers were few. And even those who followed Him lacked a vigor in their discipleship. There was no urgency, no sense of compulsion.

The cursing of the fig tree took place after the triumphal entry. There is no mistaking the fact that there was a profound reason for the deed. Jesus rarely did things without purpose, and what few He may have done are not recorded by the Gospel writers. This is a parabolic act and it is unquestionably a parable of judgment.

The first thing to be noted is Jesus' extreme disappointment at finding the tree without fruit. The narrative says that He was hungry. It may well be that it was the fact of His hunger which prompted Him to use the fig tree as a symbol and parable. Since He was actually physically hungry there would understandably be keen disappointment at finding the tree without fruit.

This rather commonplace occurrence set the stage for the teaching of an eternal truth. Jesus merely used the present situation. Surely the tree was not cursed simply because, and for no other reason than that there was no fruit. That would be an utterly childish display of temper. There was a deeper reason for His action.

The disappointment of our Lord at not finding fruit is certainly indicative of His keen disappointment at not finding fruit for the Kingdom in the lives of His disciples. Remember that His ministry was nearly at an end, and He must soon turn over the future of the Kingdom to other hands. But how disappointed He was in these who must be entrusted with the responsibility. They had slept when they should have been alert. In disappointment He asked, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" They faltered, and fell by the wayside. They could not do the things He had told them would be possible and He plainly said that it was because of their littleness of faith.

It is a parable of an eternal truth: the Master's disappointment over the waver-

ing witness of His disciples. That disappointment rides the centuries and focusses upon our own lives. Did you ever stop to think about it? Possibly Christ is disappointed in you! And be sure that He is if your life, like the barren fig tree, has failed to produce fruits for the Kingdom of God.

The second thing that we should note is that the curse was a direct result of the tree's failure to produce. This should say something to our own spiritual lives, for it is a parable of profound and unflinching spiritual truth. If our lives are not producing fruits for the Kingdom, then our spirituality is in danger of losing its vitality.

What is true for our personal lives is precisely as true in the life of the Church itself. It was the late Doctor John McNaughter who once said in a Commencement sermon, "Everything hangs on the Church's faithfulness to the Great Commission." Now the main concern of Dr. McNaughter in this particular statement was not the salvation of the heathen, but the salvation of the Church. He was aware, to be sure, of the necessity of taking the Gospel to the lost in order that they might be redeemed. But he was also aware of the absolute need of the Church's missionary outlook in order to keep alive its own spiritual vitality.

There is a twofold purpose in our missionary program. It is this fact which is at the heart of God's commission to Peter to preach to Cornelius. A careful reading of the incident reveals that God's main concern was not Cornelius but Peter. If God desired the Centurion's conversion, He could have effected it in the same manner as He did Paul's, without the help of a third party. But God's vital concern was the spiritual passion of Peter. He wanted the Apostle to have a heart burdened with the lost.

Hear again the ringing challenge, "Everything hangs on the Church's faithfulness to the Great Commission." The tragic note which must be introduced is that the Church has not been altogether faithful in its primary task. Worse, it has often been uninterested. Recall the experience of William Carey in London. He went to the convention of his church and

pleaded for missionaries to assume the burden of taking the Gospel to the unredeemed. But the moderator only said to him, "Young man, sit down. If God wants the heathen converted, He'll do it without your help." This is still the attitude of many who claim the promise of Christ. They want His promise for themselves, but they do not want to take His promises to the unredeemed.

And the fig tree withered! It withered because it failed to produce. God's warning to us, as individuals and as a Church, is that our spiritual dynamic ebbs away if we do not produce fruits for His Kingdom.

The third lesson which comes to us out of this incident is that positive faith creates power to produce mighty acts. Lack of faith causes us to perish within. A real, vital conviction will enable us to do wonders beyond our wildest imagining.

Jesus used a figure of speech to emphasize His point. He told the disciples that if they had faith they would be able to say to the mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea, and it shall be done. Let us face the fact quite honestly: Jesus was using a figure of speech to convey a spiritual truth. This certainly was not a promise that the disciples would be able to move, physically, real mountains. I once heard a sermon dealing with this incident, and the tenor of the message was that whole mountain ranges actually can be moved, provided we have enough faith. Thus said the preacher: "Jesus promised it, and He meant it literally." And then the good brother went on to observe that no record exists of any mountains having been moved -- the obvious reason being that no one has ever yet had sufficient faith!

Our Lord meant His disciples to see this truth: the seemingly impossible can be accomplished by faith. The Christian religion is far above such utterly senseless things as moving earthly mountains. It would be rather presumptuous of us to decide that God placed the mountains in the wrong places! The implication for us ought to be that the mountainous problems of life can be conquered when we labor in the strength of Christ. Then the promise begins to take on meaning for

each of us.

But more: the deeper meaning of this promise is not for the superficial tasks of the earthly life; it is for the spiritual; it is for the soul; it is for eternity. Faith that moves mountains! A real and trusting faith in Christ removes the mountain of sin. Surely this is the greatest miracle of all; this is the real impossibility, but it is accomplished by faith.

Positive faith brings into our lives power to live on a higher level. The mightiest act any one of us can perform is the act of living a life of purity by the power of Christ. No other earthly deed can be called its equal; no other is more glowing testimony of devotion to our Lord.

Faith in Jesus is the source of our power to live in His strength. That power flows down to us from that most profound of all events, Calvary. It was the cross of Christ which opened the gates of heaven; it is from His cross that comes the healing stream of mercy which binds up the wounds of an ailing humanity. That supreme act of love destroyed the power of sin to hold man's soul in bondage. The cross held Jesus captive, but it set mankind free.

What a message the withered fig tree has for us. How lightly have we taken that message; how vaguely have we understood. It was more than the venting of divine truth. It continues to warn us today that failure to produce fruits for His Kingdom will bring forth His wrath. But it continues to speak a message of hope as well. It assures us that faith in the Son of God as our Saviour will remove the mountain of sin from every soul that leans upon Him, and will finally bring us to everlasting life.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is a five-pointed star. When the Christian prays he communes with God; when he studies God's Word, he learns from God; when he seeks the unsaved, he works with God; when he ministers, he shows forth God; and when he gives, he shares with God. No Christian life can be complete unless his star is complete.

Selected

The Foolishness of Preaching

ROBERT LLOYD ROBERTS

Text: 1 Cor. 1:21 . . . it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

LET us note, first of all, that the foolishness of preaching is not the same as the preaching of foolishness. The preaching of foolishness is no great credit to the ministry. In looking over some of my sermon notes of thirty years ago, I said to myself, "Surely I didn't say such things as that, I couldn't say that now, it would sound so foolish." In one sermon, I advocated that all Christians should wash one another's feet, as Jesus did. In another I advocated that since a man was put to death in the Old Testament for picking up sticks on the Sabbath, we should have severe punishment for all Sabbath breaking, although I did not go as far as to advocate the death penalty. Possibly, I still say many foolish things in my sermons today, but I hope I do not go as far as I did thirty years ago when I wanted to change the world overnight.

I heard a sermon once in which the preacher claimed that his car was out of gas on a dark and stormy night, and he prayed to God in a forest at the foot of a steep hill, and he started his car and went up the hill and to the hospital, where he was taking a sick child. I don't know what happened in this case, unless there was still some gas in the tank that he did not know about, or that the gas line had just been temporarily clogged. But the story made more people smile than it made believe in the power of prayer. Even if true, some seemingly absurd stories had better never been told, for they make people laugh and sneer rather than believe.

Paul's advice to us in such cases would be to keep such stories to ourselves. Romans 14:22. "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." Paul said that he didn't fight as one that beateth the air. He was no shadow boxer. I suppose one reason why we are tempted to answer questions that no one is asking

is that we live too much with our books and not enough with our people. If we really know and understand people, then we will answer the questions they are asking. There is the old saying that the preacher who is invisible through the week will be incomprehensible on Sunday. This is because he lives in his own little world, all cooped up in his study by himself. So it is that we are tempted to make up foolish little sermons that mean little if anything and get nowhere in our modern life.

Is Preaching Foolishness

We condemn the idea of the preaching of foolishness. But we have to face the idea of the foolishness of preaching. Shall we condemn all preaching as foolishness? Of course the answer is "No." But the objection to so much of it is raised that preaching is a weak and ineffective instrument of propaganda. It depends upon argument and persuasion, upon sales-talks. It is time consuming, so slow and erratic. Cortez converted the Mexicans not by the slow method of preaching but by the surer method of the sword. He said that all should believe in Christ or be put to the sword.

The Communists do not propagate Communism entirely by preaching and printing, but if necessary they use the sword, the concentration camp and enforced brain-washing to accomplish their purpose. The Nazis and Italian Fascists used similar methods. It was believe or else, with them. If words failed, if fear could not move them, then force was used to convert the stubborn citizens who wanted to think as they pleased.

Christians have used the rack and pinion, the molten lead, and fire to make the heretics repent or die. But in general Christianity, from the days of its Founder, has moved slowly but surely by the foolishness of preaching, by argument and persuasion. Isaiah preached in this way, not by fire and sword but by words. God set the pattern of preaching for him when He said, "Come now, and let us reason together."

"The pen is mightier than the sword." Ideas are stronger than guns and bullets. This is why, in the long run, reason is better than force, to get permanent results. Preaching may seem foolishness,

but after all, in the long view of history, it does get results. At the same time, it may seem slow and ineffective, but ideas and truth will prevail. Force and violence are temporary. When the pressure was removed what happened to Nazism and Fascism? They almost completely dropped out of the world picture. Unless Communism has truth in it and eternal ideas it will die out when its force and violence are expended. But Christ and Christianity go on like the brook, forever.

When Is The Preaching of Foolishness Good?

We condemned the preaching of foolishness. We will have to qualify that condemnation, for the world sometimes thinks that truth is foolishness. They laughed at Columbus for saying the world is round.

Dr. John Hutton included in this idea of the preaching of foolishness, the propensity preachers have for answering questions no one is asking. It is like making a straw man just to knock him down. They laughed at Jenner for vaccinating for smallpox. Robert Fulton nearly wore his life away trying to prove that he could make a practical steamboat. Einstein's theory of relativity was a joke until the atom bomb came along. Many great ideas have been greeted with jeers at first, only to be hailed later as wonders. You cannot keep a good idea down. "Truth will out." So what may seem like foolishness to one age may be the very life of another. Some scoffed at radio and television as nonsensical ideas like those of Jules Verne, only later to have to eat their words.

So it is with the Cross of Christ. To the Greek philosophers it was foolishness. The learned men of Athens gave Paul little consideration, so he moved on to Corinth. Here he got a better hearing but still met with much doubt and skepticism. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness." Unto the Greeks, foolishness."

But the cross of Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God. The cross shows first of all the awful nature of sin. It shows that sin is such a terrible thing that it took extreme measures to overcome it. It took the death of God's own Son to cancel the power of sin. If sin

were of little or no account God would not have had to make such a sacrifice for us to save us from sin.

In the second place, the cross shows the deep need of man. The cross shows how powerless man was to save himself by his own efforts. If man could have saved himself by his own efforts, God would not have needed to intervene in man's behalf. But man was so poor and helpless and so bound down by sin that he could not possibly escape from its coils, so Christ had to die to save us. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching (the Cross) to save them that believe."

In the third place, the cross shows the terrible price God had to pay to redeem man. Sin is such a terrible thing, man is so hopelessly caught in its toils, that God had to give His all to rescue man. The cross is the price God had to pay. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." So it is that we preach Christ crucified, for unto them which are called it is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the love of God. Our salvation is not by works, but by grace through faith, and even our faith is the gift of God.

The Foolishness of God

"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than man." The cross was foolishness to the Greeks, and a stumbling block to the Jew. The atheist may laugh at the cross. The philosopher may be puzzled by the cross. The materialist may ignore the cross. The infidel may deny the existence of the cross. The worldlywise man may despise the cross. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Or, as Moffatt puts it, "For when the world with all its wisdom failed to know God in His wisdom, God resolved to save believers by the 'sheer folly' of the Christian message."



The Reward of Faith

F. C. VIELE

Text: Hebr. 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.

FAITH is one of the most ordinary features of life, and yet it is something that grips the minds of men with special significance when it is associated with the religious relationships of mankind. There is nothing that does not, in some way, relate itself to faith in its varied forms of expression.

It is faith that enables men to accomplish all the essential purposes of life, whether it be religion, business or social affairs. You display the meaning of faith every time you buy a ticket to travel by rail, plane or boat. In fact there is nothing that can be done that is of any value to yourself or to life in general that is not immediately related to the meaning and purpose of faith.

Consider the meaning and purpose of faith as it is purposefully represented in the activities of the church. This ought to awaken in every breast the latent powers of devotion as applied to the ideals and standards of belief, that during the centuries have opened the way for men to reveal their thoughts of God in the enlightening terms of practical living. Since the initial days of religious action men have been privileged to see the ample fruits of faith in the lives of all who are interested in the spiritual destiny of mankind.

There are three phases of faith in the doctrinal arrangement in every evangelical church which are supremely important as examples of men's ambitions to get right with God and to live acceptably and helpfully among their fellows. This trio of distinguishing Christian features are known as Justification, Regeneration, and Sanctification.

The Apostle is very clear in his definition of Justification in its essential meaning and its indispensable place in the lives of all who have acknowledged Christ as their personal Saviour. In Romans 5:1 we read, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God

through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." It is Justification that opens the gateway leading into the devotional garden of the divine presence. To be justified according to Christian standards of righteousness means that the subject has been given the blessing of God as though he were worthy of the blessing incident to forgiveness. In other words, the Lord treats the person who is justified as though he had never transgressed the laws of divine revelation. This attitude toward the justified man is just like the heavenly Father as He has been made known through the impressive ministrations of Christ. But men are not always so readily inclined to deal with one another. With God as He has been made known through Christ and the office work of the Holy Spirit, it is in harmony with His changeless disposition to deal with men according to the vital needs of their lives. Of Jesus it was said, "He needed not any man should testify of men; for he knew what was in man." And we are further impressed with the all-important place that Justification has in the lives of penitent people as we recall the two men who went into the temple to observe their devotional obligations, one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee praised the virtues of his own life, while the poor penitent publican "would not so much as lift his eyes toward heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." And we are told that "he went down to his house justified."

The second feature of a working faith is regeneration, or a transformed relation to God through the merits of Jesus Christ which results in a balanced conception of life in all business and social relationships. It is infinitely more than an interesting theme for discussion, despite the differences of opinion that prevail. There was no unanimity of belief among the representatives of the early church, but all were united in acknowledging the great need of feeling the impact of the divine approval, and to reveal the unquestioned evidences of such a spiritual transformation in all the asso-

tations of that day.

The conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus is suggestive of the conflicting opinions of men with reference to their spiritual need. Nicodemus was satisfied that Jesus was honored with a specialized relation to God, by which men could be made partakers of the divine nature. But Jesus gradually led him out into larger fields of spiritual understanding, and opened his heart for the reception of something real and indispensable when he said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again."

It is the new life in Christ that Christians everywhere have professed to believe. But they are not only expected to believe in the essentiality of the spiritual transformation, but they are also expected to demonstrate the sublime reality of its nature in their daily relations with their fellowmen. And this means you, whoever you may be, wherever you may live and whatever you may be doing. You are expected to strive to exemplify the meaning of what you believe as a member of the church. In observing these obligations your life will be crowned with the blessing of God and the confidence of men.

Thus, in brief, we have the salient evidences of the creative mission of regeneration. It is a mighty lever in the hand of God to break up the fallow ground of indifference and active opposition to the plan of the Lord, as exemplified in the atonement of Christ which was designed to bring men to the higher planes of understanding and importance according to the overshadowing need of human nature.

Sanctification is the third step toward perfecting our relation with God and our influence with our fellowmen. Sanctification is the logical amplification of the sublime meaning of whatever we decide to do with our "calling of God in Christ Jesus."

There are people who seem to be perfectly normal until someone mentions the subject of Sanctification. Anyone who is sanctified ought to be agreeable with others, but it does not always work out that way. Some of the most unpleasant people I have known declared that they had experienced what they were pleased to call "entire sanctification," but I have never heard of more than one kind

of Sanctification and that is the kind that makes people friendly and tolerant.

Can you imagine Paul had anything in mind but a perfect understanding of life and an attractive disposition when he addressed himself to the church at Thessalonica saying, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." And it was an extended application of the same thought when he wrote to the Colossians concerning their relation to Christ as he said, "And ye are complete in him." It follows that Sanctification, which is inseparably associated with Justification and Regeneration, is the logical example of faith applied to the varied conditions of life.

The interest of the Master in the cause He came to represent and perfect was shown in His work to the end. We are told that "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." His farewell admonition to His disciples on Mt. Olivet was charged with instructional specifications. First, He directed them to tarry "in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high." Then they were directed to go out and "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." After having won them to the cause that centered in the heart of the Son of God, they were directed to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." It is especially important to note the line of procedure in approaching men with the gospel message. Discipleship or acceptance came first and was to be followed by information relating to the ruling object of Christ's appearance among men.

Quite largely, however, among many churches, the line of approach has been changed by trying to make people Christians by a systematic course of instruction. No church can restore sinners to the favor of God without having something to say about the place of the "new birth" in the lives of men, as it is set forth in the teachings of Christ and His Apostles.

How many churches are putting on a program of homemade evangelism, which is nothing more important than the familiar interest represented in an ordinary ser-

vice of worship?

These services are, for the most part attended only by those who can be depended upon to represent and maintain the regular church services.

This age has been quite thoroughly instructed in the ideals of the Gospel. What we need to do is to take the further step of persuading man to accept Christ as the saving power of their lives. To evangelize means primarily, to instruct. To Christianize means to be transformed and become examples of Christ's power to save the soul from the effects of sin. Men not only need to know that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, but they need especially to be acquainted with Christ as the saving strength of their lives, by which they may experience the purifying qualities of divine grace "in the world that now is" and rejoice in the hope of the world that is to come.



Living Responsibility

W. P. HARES

Text: Eph. 5:15 - Live life, then with a sense of responsibility, not as men who do not know the meaning and purpose of life, but as those who do. Make the best of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days. Don't be vague, but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of God.

THAT was originally written nineteen hundred years ago, but had we today a man of God like St. Paul, he might well give us the same advice, for it is as applicable for us today as it was for the Ephesian Christians of Paul's time.

There are difficulties today which we have to meet and overcome as there were in the first century, and we are called upon to "live with a due sense of responsibility, not careless as men who do not understand or know the meaning and purpose of life, but as those who do."

We are living in days when many, very many are utterly indifferent to the meaning and purpose of life. As regards re-

sponsibility, they couldn't care less. They live regardless of the fact that they have been brought into the world for purpose; that God has given them life that they may carry out His will; that they may glorify God by doing His will; that this world is just a testing place in which they are being tried by God; that it is a preparation for the life beyond the grave.

They have never understood, nor tried to understand the meaning and purpose of the life God has given them, the life they are now living. They never look ahead; they make no sort of preparation for a life beyond the grave. They are content, when the time comes, to be snuffed out as we snuff a candle.

The day will come when they realize what a terrible mistake they have made, and that realization will come too late to rectify their error. Meanwhile they go on living carelessly with no thought of the future. "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die;" and that is their opinion of the meaning and purpose of life. A very poor ideal, at best.

St. Paul is writing to seriously-minded men, to men who have a due sense of responsibility as regards their living and conduct; who have understood to some extent the meaning and purpose of life, and he urges them to "make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days," but Paul wishes them to dig deeper into its meaning so that they may fulfill more perfectly its 'purpose.' We, too, will do well to heed its exhortation.

The Westminster Catechism begins with the question, "What is the end - the purpose of man?" And the answer is "That he should glorify God and enjoy Him forever." That, my friends, is the purpose of life, that each living soul should glorify the God who made him, and enjoy Him now and forever.

Such was the teaching of the apostle Paul. Writing to the Christians in Corinth, he tells them, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Whatever you do. That covers everything of our daily life and conduct. Does it not? In the home, doing the daily household chores; in the factory and workshop; in the office and behind the

counter; in the sports arenas; in the garden, the allotment and field; tending the stock - whatever you do, writes St. Paul, do it to the glory of God, that by your faithful work God may be glorified.

"Live and work with a due sense of responsibility," Paul writes. If we all lived and worked like that, realizing our responsibility to do all to the glory of God, we would solve very quickly all of our industrial and political troubles.

We should not be working always with our eye on the clock, ready at the moment to put our tools down; we should sweep in all the corners and under the mat; and perhaps sometimes we should remember Paul's exhortation to the workmen of Ephesus - and they were slaves! "to work, not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord, and not to men."

Paul has a word for the master, the employer, too. He would not only be willing but anxious to give his employees the best wages, the best working conditions; he will be considerate, thoughtful, sympathetic and helpful to all those who work for him. Paul writes to the masters of slaves, to employers, "Remember, then, you employers, that your responsibility is to be fair and just toward those whom you employ, never forgetting that you, yourselves have a heavenly Employer." So much for 'a due sense of responsibility' regarding our daily life and conduct as masters or employers.

In our text Paul continues, "Make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days." That might have been written just for us today, for times are very difficult for most people. True, we are living in something of a welfare state, in which the Government takes care of its subjects from birth to death. There is employment for all who are willing to work, but a terrible shortage of houses. In every town there is a long list of people waiting for an empty house they may make a home. Taxes of every kind are heavy, prices are soaring, many more schools are needed and there is always the threat of another war, with the terrifying atomic and hydrogen bombs. The days are difficult, yet in spite of the difficulties, or rather because of them,

Paul writes: "Make the best use of your time."

How that is to be done each one of us must decide for himself. I don't think we make the best use of our time when we fill up football and cricket coupons in the vain hope of spotting a winner, and so winning a big money prize. That is a bum's game and a waste of time and money. And when thousands go to the dogs, simply to bet and lose their money, they certainly are not living with a due sense of responsibility or so that they may glorify God. Television is helping countless to waste much of their time which should be more usefully spent. Paul's exhortation must be seriously heeded by us all: "Make the best use of your time, that you may be able to cope with the difficulties of these days."

Then Paul concludes his homily; and it is important. "Don't be vague, but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of God." Don't be vague. Some of us are prone to be doubtful, uncertain, hazy about life and its purposes, and Paul urges us not to be vague about this all-important matter, and tells us "to grasp firmly what you know to be the will of God."

How are we to discover what the will of God is? Well, the Bible is the word of God, and Paul tells Timothy, and tells us, too, that it is "inspired by God, and is useful for teaching the faith and correcting error, for re-setting the direction of a man's life, and training him in good living." The Scriptures, Paul continues, "are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God, and they fit him fully for all branches of his work."

That is what we need. If we prayerfully study that Book, we shall certainly discover in it what is the will of God. Make it your Guide Book through life and you will not be led astray.

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The CHURCH

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ILLUSTRATIONS

AWARENESS

Text: Prov. 8:34 - Blessed is the man that heareth me.

When 23 year-old Georgia Griffith graduated from Capital University School of Music, she planned to teach music to the blind - - because she, herself is blind.

But there were no positions for her in that field, so she began to instruct pupils who could see. When beginners ask her how she can tell when their fingers are held incorrectly over the piano keys, she says, "It's very easy to tell! The notes don't sound as they should; haven't you ever noticed this?"

WHY HE COULDN'T COVER THE STORY

Text: Rev. 2:10 - Faithful unto death.

A newspaper man connected with the New York World in the early part of the twentieth century, was injured in a bad train wreck at Stamford, Connecticut. Many were killed, and this reporter, Gregory Hume, true to his instinct as a newspaper man, was faithful to the highest traditions of his vocation until the last.

A stranger bent over him, but the man realized his condition and just managed to whisper:

"Reach in my pocket . . . get the price of a phone call to the World . . . call the city desk and tell them about this wreck . . . say I'm sorry I can't cover this story."

Then he died, but his last thought and word were of his paper.

TRANSFORMED - - NOT CONFORMED

Text: Rom. 12:2 - Instead of being moulded to this world, have your mind renewed, and so be transformed. (Moffat)

My grandfather owned a brickyard. How often have I stood beside the brickmaker; seen him cut off the right sized piece of clay and throw it with swift, strong and accurate hands down into the oblong mold. Three times he did it, into as many separate molds, and then sliced the tops off, lifted the molds, and there they were, three identical molds of the same shape and size.

Which is exactly what Paul means when

he says, "Be not conformed to this world; don't be squeezed into its ideals, attitudes, actions. Be yourself. In fact be bigger than yourself. Be *transformed* - - that is, be carried clear across into a larger life by the renewing of your minds and thus work out in your lives the will of God."

JAYWALKERS

Text: Prov. 12:15 - He that harkeneth unto counsel is wise.

Ignoring traffic rules, and the obvious terrifying results, provide a concrete demonstration of the need of Do's and Dont's in all phases of everyday life, and the cost for ignoring or disobeying them.

In Rochester, the jaywalker is required to attend a lecture on Traffic Safety in the Traffic Court. Pictures of actual accidents caused by willful or careless violations of traffic rules are shown -- a battered body being taken to the morgue -- a group of attendants trying to minister to the mangled body of a young woman -- "I was there," the monotone of an officer's voice breaks the tense silence, "she didn't bother to go to the cross walk." After a long silence, "Are there any questions?"

There are no questions! Each attendant at the lecture enrolled in the class in the self-same manner, that is by ignoring some safety rule. Here is a fine example of the physical results of breaking safety laws, or just ignoring them, and it should serve as a lesson to all of us regarding safety rules, whether related to man or God.

THE PATH OF SILVER

Text: Hebr. 2:9 - That by the grace of God he might taste of death for every man.

If one stand beside the ocean on a moonlit night, he sees a path of silver from the moon to his own feet. There is no escaping it. If he moves miles in either direction, the beam of light continues to lie directly between him and the moon. There is something in the action of light and in the structure of his eyes which renders this inescapable. Every man who looks wistfully towards the cross finds a similar direct nexus between the Crucified and himself. As there is a solidarity which links man's sin today with the wickedness of those who slew Christ, so there is a ray of love



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which appears to come to him straight from the heart of the Saviour. He cannot get away from it. Christ's sacrifice has a personal meaning for him; and in that love he knows his own incalculable worth to God.

Henry Sloan Coffin

NO HEART BEHIND THE VOICE

Text: 1 Cor. 13:13 - But now abideth faith, hope and love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

A generation ago there appeared in Paris one whose voice was counted the most perfect in Europe. Musical critics gave unstinted praise to the purity of tone and accuracy of execution. Yet in a few weeks the audience had dwindled to a mere handful, and in a few years the singer's name was forgotten. Obscurity overtook the singer because there was no heart behind the voice, and so the tones became metallic. Contrariwise, the history of Jenny Lind contains a letter to a friend in Sweden, in which the singer writes, "Oh, that I may live two years longer and be permitted to save enough money to complete my orphan's home!"

WORRY ANTS

Text: Eccl. 9:11 - The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.

The story is told of the hunter who shot a tiger and thought he had killed it, but, on approaching the animal, it sprang up and seizing the hunter crushed the bones of his knee and then fell back

dead.

The hunter found he could not move and his cries for help went unheard. After a few hours, however, he forgot the tiger and even the broken bones in his knee, in his struggle with countless hordes of little ants, which covered him and tortured his whole body. Had it not been for a timely rescue, he would have been destroyed by the little ants.

So it is in many human experiences. It is not the great tiger of calamity and grief that kills us, but the little ant worries of everyday life.



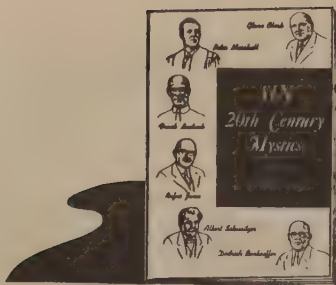
COURTESIES

(From page 404)

professions, the clergy should allow none to outdo them in the matter of fraternity.

To The Predecessor

In arriving at a new field, the parishioners frequently, as a matter of conversation, enter into a discussion of the new minister's predecessor, his work, habits, eccentricities and even his personality. This, in itself, hardly reflects refinement, especially if continued to great length, but it seems to serve as a topic of conversation, and is often well meant on the part of the parishioner. This is the opportunity for a preacher to manifest a kindly interest in the work of his predecessor and to speak highly of a brother minister, or at least, by silence, to discourage any evil



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speaking concerning him. That would be the loyal thing to do.

A minister may be, probably is, building upon another man's foundation - that of his predecessor, who is largely responsible for the high morale and the healthy state of the parish he has just assumed. That predecessor deserves your courtesy and honor. If he returns to the parish to visit friends of former days, by calling on him his successor shows a real courtesy and the call will probably be returned before the predecessor leaves town.

A better feeling will result than if the former minister comes and goes without having seen his successor, or his successor having seen him. No layman should be allowed to exceed a minister in showing a brother minister proper esteem. If convenient to secure one's predecessor occasionally for a speaker at some special function, his intimate

friends will be pleased he will be pleased and the present pastor will be manifesting a gracious and thoughtful generosity.

To The Successor

A minister also has a very definite obligation to his successor. He will inherit his predecessor's problems as well as his successes. If the predecessor has left a church debt behind, he must wrestle with that. If the predecessor has left a personal debt, he must in some way stand between it and the predecessor's reputation. A rather peculiar feeling is experienced if a business man in the community produces his books and shows a minister his predecessor's unpaid account.

The minister certainly owes it to his successor to leave accurately kept records, visiting lists, maps of parish, and even so small a matter as a clean rectory, parsonage or manse.

Furthermore, there are certain amenities of still greater importance which the minister owes his successor. Naturally, he would not "cultivate" the people of his old charge, nor in any way exploit his former field of labor. Having left the field as pastor, he should cleanly leave it. He has a new field, and no man should expect to be the shepherd of his own, and another man's flock at one and the same time.

There may be occasions when a pastor will be called back to a former field, or to a neighbor's field, to officiate at a wedding, funeral or baptism. Can such a procedure, in the light of the finest courtesies, be regarded as ethical? Is it not time that the public be educated to the use of their own ministers while they have them, rather than wait until they have moved away, and then ask them back for any such occasions? There are different reasons why people fall into such practices as these. Sometimes it is a matter, purely, of fancy. There may be no particular reason except that their neighbors have done likewise in similar circumstances, it has become a precedent, and they must keep up with the fashion. Again, there may be instances in which a greater display is made by calling a former minister for a funeral or like service, though the practice is more generally followed if the former minister is a convenient distance away. There may be cases in which the parties concerned happen to have a personal pique at their resident pastor, and do not hesitate to use such means in attempting to humiliate him. There may be instances in which the minister from outside happens to

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be a special friend of the family, and still others in which the only reason that can be advanced for such practice is there is an absolute lack of education in the matter of ministerial courtesies.

In the strictest sense it seems hardly courteous to the minister who has been called, or sent to a particular field, to ask him to step aside while another from the outside is called in to perform ceremonies ordinarily performed by the minister-in-charge. There are instances in which the very intimate friend of the former pastor has died, and the minister will not feel himself as one of the mourners. In such a case, he will return even though uninvited, and will attend the funeral as a friend or as a mourner, without necessarily taking charge of the service.

But, granting that a former minister, who had known intimately and long, a friend now deceased, is wholly justified in returning for the occasion of the burial, it is still unnecessary that discourtesy be shown his brother minister now resident in the parish. Though the latter may not have been long in the field, nor closely acquainted with the deceased, courtesy will provide a way whereby he may still be the officiating minister. The former pastor, who has known the deceased well and long, may give the principle address or only officiate at the grave, yet the minister-in-charge may conduct the services. He may, in other words, be the liturgist and his predecessor the preacher. By this arrangement, the friends of the deceased should be wholly satisfied, and the clergy still show the proper courtesies due each other. But it seems to the writer that the clergy should formulate the code of ethics by which they are to be

governed, and let the laity know that it exists.

In the matter of weddings it is certainly clear that the performance of the same is a small courtesy which is due one's own minister, though there will be instances when sentiment or courtesy will call in some other minister to assist in the ceremony, and the same would be equally proper in baptisms.

To The Neighbor

Obviously there are many courtesies which ministers owe their neighbors, whether of their own or other denominations, and the mutual happiness of all ministers concerned will depend very largely upon the performance of these courtesies. The nearer the parishes are together, the more frequent will be the occasions for showing these courtesies. It may not be necessary to have union services each Sunday night, or even once a month to show that a friendly feeling exists between neighboring churches and pastors, but the feeling must exist nevertheless, if "men are to know that we are His disciples."

Ministers are hardly to be thought of as competitors with their fellow-workers whose names are in the "Book of Life." They are not engaged in popularity contests; they are to rise, not one above the other, but one with the other and they will be fighting shoulder to shoulder, in most cases, long after they, their neighbors and their successors have departed to other parishes. There should be a tie that binds them even more closely to each other than to their parishioners.

To The Stranger

Even those with whom we may not have had any previous acquaintance, if in good and

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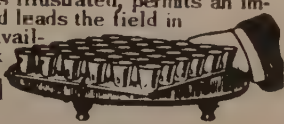
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regular standing, are our brothers too, and access should be easy and natural. Prompt attention to the correspondence of those we have not met, may at some future time give greater satisfaction than we may now imagine.

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BOOKS

THE GOD OF OUR FAITH. Harris Franklin Rall. Abingdon. 158pp. \$2.75.

Dr. Rall, professor emeritus of theology of Garrett Bible Institute, tells in the clear and ordered language of a theologian and teacher the truths about God and the world, by which a man may live. Chapters on Authoritative Empirical and Philosophical Theology make up the first section on the Meaning and Method of Theology. In Part Two he gives five chapters to Making A Christian Theology dealing with tradition, faith, creeds and reason to reveal God. Part Three has five chapters to show God is good, transcendent and immanent. The fourth part, God and the World, takes up the way and the goal of God and the problem of evil. A useful bibliography and two indices add to the value of the book. It covers the general field of systematic theology in language and thinking suitable to laymen as well as ministers, to help all to love God with all their minds, following the example of the great Teacher. Dr. Rall does not hesitate to face critical problems which challenge Christian faith, but treats them with logical and Biblical consideration. Here is a valuable guide to a person's thinking about God which will strengthen his faith and give God His proper place in our scheme of life.

Claude Richmond

EVER ONE GOD, Robert W. Lutnes, Augsburg, 365pp. \$3.50.

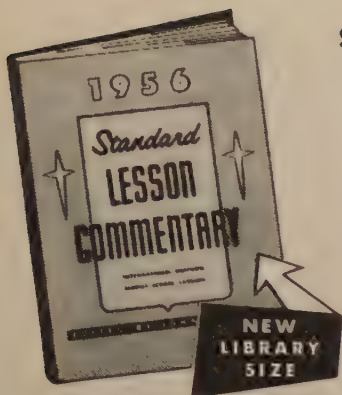
In this remarkable novel the author introduces us at once into the maelstrom of post-war fears and hopes of the displaced hosts of Central Europe, who sought with longing and hope a refuge in the concentration camps and the help of the American Agents who might fulfil their dreams of a new life in America. The problems were not all on one side, however, the strenuous labors and the temptations under which our American agents labored are fully set forth.

The writing in this book is done from keen observation and with the dramatic unfolding of a gifted author. The book will deepen the Christian concern of all who think seriously of America's part in making a new humanity from the human wreckage of war.

Frederick W. Burnham

A CANDLE IN THE DARK. Orva Lee Ice, Abingdon Press. 128pp. \$2.00.

Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Dr. Ice is in frequent demand as a speaker before young people. A ready and friendly wit lightens these essays with anecdotes in an easy, informal style, to bring the light of faith, hope and love to the solving of problems which perplex young people. The 16 messages have attractive titles. "Shockings Alive," "The Serpent in the House," "Won't Power," and the like. Most start with little stories, some in the first person. The remarks of a certain Jeb on his



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return from the coast where everything was too perfect, gives the title, "The Beauty of The Imperfect," emphasizing that much is left for us to do. The call of the imperfect, he says, is the inspiration for us to be useful, the glory of being of service, "People who think themselves perfect," he adds, "often make their perfection the ugliest thing about them," and again, "Quite often the imperfection itself is the attractive thing." All this makes a volume both interesting and convincing as well as entertaining, and readers share the rich experiences of the young people who hear him in person.

Claude Richmond

RELIGION IN PRISON, J. Arthur Hoyles. Philosophical. \$3.50

Those dealing with penology are coming to realize the place of religion in prison life and reform. There is little material on the subject, and this volume sets forth basic ideas and the reasons. There is tracing of historical background, for much of which we should be ashamed, and a clear showing of good results from religious ministry in prisons. A good chapter is "Miracles Still Happen," showing that God's grace works in prison. Of the death penalty, he writes "The acceptance of a merciful and constructive attitude to the murderer as well as to all other criminals would go far to eradicate the poison which spreads from the death cell to the whole prison. As long as the gallows remain the intention of the Christian within prison walls will be viewed with suspicion." This book is worth serious study.

William R. Siegart

THE CHRISTIAN IMPERATIVE. Max Warren. Scribner's. 141pp. \$3.00.

This book has four main divisions: "Go Preach," "Go Teach," "Go Heal," and "Go Baptize." The Canon explains the great imperative recorded in the Gospels.

Ours is basically a preaching ministry, but we must think of "preaching" as going beyond the delivery of a sermon. The church has its class-room and hospital. It also has a rite, an initiation into the membership and fellowship. These themes are dealt with in a scholarly yet a practical interpretation.

The last chapter titled The How of Obedience brings to focus the essentials of Christian discipleship by way of loyalty, sacrifice and such other virtues as constitute a true Christian Adventure. We are given a re-statement of our marching orders. In a day of multiplied interests, the imperative might be sidetracked.

Richard Braunstein

DYNAMIC SUNDAY SCHOOL TALKS TO CHILDREN, Joseph A. Schofield, Jr., W.A. Wilde. 184pp. \$2.00.

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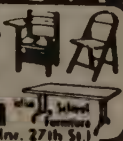
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participation. *William R. Siegart*

THE GIFT

(From page 405)

hood and sacrifice. No gift is of any
honest value or worth unless it comes
from the heart of the giver. Anyone who
can foot the bill may buy and give any-
thing to whomsoever he will without ever
a wee portion of the heart being involved.
The true gift is the one that comes from
the heart, be it the heart of man or the
heart of God, which of course carries us
right back to those far distant Judean
Hills and the Christmas gift of which
the angels sang, the gift that is "unto
you."

So, it is time to say again, "Have
joyous Christmastide, and keep your
blessed gift near you through the years."

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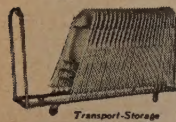
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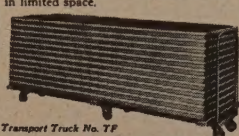
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